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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5611
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CJTF HOA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 002879

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DEPARTMENT FOR AF A/S FRAZER AND AF/SPG
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND SHORTLEY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/16/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SU](#) [UN](#) [EC](#)

SUBJECT: UNOCHA OFFICIAL TO SE NATSIOS: DARFUR DETERIORATING

Classified By: CDA Cameron Hume, Reason: Sections 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) During December 10 meeting with SE Natsios, Deputy Director for Sudan of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) Michael McDonagh detailed the deteriorating security situation in Darfur. He noted that the UN had launched six evacuations of its staff in the previous week and were preparing for further instability. McDonagh said that December had been a troubled month in past years, with Sudanese government-inspired attacks occurring in both December 2004 and 2005. According to McDonagh, humanitarian access in North Darfur had declined from a 100-percent in April 2006 to being the worst in the region because the Janjaweed were targeting it as a Zaghawa homeland. He warned that as the number of no-go areas increased, so did the potential for mass malnutrition. McDonagh said that Nyala remained the only safe airport in the three Darfur states.

¶2. (C) McDonagh criticized Senior Assistant to the President and Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) leader Minni Minawi, the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), and the European donor community for not protecting civilians. He called Minawi a "paper tiger," whose support among the population continued to decline. He said that the National Redemption Front (NRF) was taking control of some of Minawi's area near Al Daien and Haskanita amid mounting criticism that Minawi could no longer ensure security. McDonagh claimed that he had asked AMIS commanders in El Fasher how they could sleep at night when 80,000 were threatened within two kilometers of their headquarters. He also said that he had seen "no outrage" among the European donors, with the exception of the UK and Norway, about the worsening situation. "The Sudanese lies are being accepted in Europe," said McDonagh. He said that USG and UN criticism of the Sudanese government had yielded no dividends, "not even after 600 delegations to Darfur."

¶3. (C) According to McDonagh, the Sudanese Armed Forces' (SAF) offensive had been a "complete failure," so the Sudanese government has armed Arab militias to "terrorize" the civilian population. He considered this an implicit admission by the Sudanese government that the SAF lacked the capacity to prosecute the war. McDonagh added that this, combined with a more highly politicized Darfurian population, made the situation combustible. He quoted Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General Manuel Da Silva as saying that contrary to 2004, the Darfurian people would now "stand, fight, and die politically, not retreat into the bush and die privately."

¶4. (U) SE Natsios' staff cleared this message.
HUME